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THE MESSAGE OF AHMADIYYET

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By

SIR MUHAMMAD ZAFRULLAH KHAN,
K. C. S. I., LL. D.

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MESSAGE OF AHMADIYYET

*Being a speech delivered on the 2nd March, 1935,
in the Y. M. C. A. Hall, Lahore.*

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By Mirza Asadullah Khan
Lahore, 1904

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ مُحَمَّدٌ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

وَعَلَى عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْمَسِيحِ الْمَوْجُودِ

THE MESSAGE OF AHMADIYYET

I HAVE undertaken this evening a grave duty ; and perhaps the role of a theologian is comparatively new to me, though not altogether new.

When the Secretary of the Inter-Collegiate Ahmadiyya Association approached me on this occasion, I consented to undertake to speak with rather less reluctance than I usually feel on such occasions. You would consider it paradoxical that I should have undertaken to speak on a comparatively new subject, or at any rate a subject with which I would not be associated to the same degree in the public mind of Lahore, as I would be with political subjects ; and at a time, when through a certain section of vernacular press there is sweeping a hurricane of vilification and misrepresentation against the Ahmadiyya Community and its Holy Founder (peace be on him). I assure you that it is just for this reason

that I undertook to speak this evening. I was practically certain that it would do no harm, and almost certainly, would do a great deal of good if I tried to place before you, within the short time at our disposal this evening, the main principles for which Ahmadiyyet stands, in an atmosphere, which though it might be described subsequently as one-sided, in the sense that a member of the Community was speaking, would certainly be free from the passions of bias and prejudice ; and if, at the end of this address, I am able to arouse in the minds of some of you a keener curiosity with regard to the tenets and doctrines of the Ahmadiyya Movement, this address shall have served its purpose.

Clearing the Ground

Before I enter upon the subject of "The Message of Ahmadiyyet" let me make one matter perfectly clear. I am afraid there is a good deal of misunderstanding in this matter. On the one hand, some people are apt to imagine that Ahmadiyyet brings no new message, and that therefore it is not worth bothering about. On the other, it is represented that it is a revolutionary

onslaught upon the principles of Islam ; that it, therefore, ought to be combated with the full strength of zeal, on behalf, at least, of Muslims and generally by all those who have the interest of true religion at heart. Both these are misconceptions. Ahmadiyyet is not a new faith nor a new religion. This is perfectly true. Our claim is that Ahmadiyyet is only a synonym for Islam. In order, however, not to saddle other people professing Islam, with the responsibility of our own doctrines, we have to give some name to that interpretation of Islam which our Community puts forward, I mean the interpretation which the Founder of our Community, the late Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad whom we believe to be the Promised Messiah, (peace be on him), has put forward as the true conception of Islam. This we call by the name of Ahmadiyyet. But when I say that, I do not, in any way, wish to offer to minimize or misrepresent the character of Ahmadiyyet or the position which it occupies in Islam. In the sense in which I have put before you there is nothing new in it. On the other hand, it is

an entirely new conception of Islam.—new in this sense, that to the people of the 20th. century it is an entirely new and fresh conception. For every one of our doctrines and tenets, we go back to the original sources of Islam, to the Holy Quran itself. We go back to the sayings and the doings of the Holy Prophet himself, (peace and the blessings of God be upon him). For the smallest doctrine or tenet put forward, we can quote authority in that sense. Its apparent novelty lies in the fact that the world had travelled away, leagues and miles, from Islam. It is not a new interpretation only but it is also a new dispensation, or rather a fresh dispensation in the sense I have indicated. Ahmadiyyet is not, therefore, in that conception, a slight matter which requires no attention ; it is not one of those waves which periodically appear on the surface of the religious ocean and are eventually devoured by the ocean itself.

A Philosophical Concept

Consider, for a moment, the universe, as it stands to-day. Take your thoughts, for a

moment, away from religion into the physical world. The universe to-day is exactly the same as it was twenty centuries ago. We inhabit the same earth, we are influenced by the courses of the same planets, we are given life and freshness by the same rain and sun ; nothing new, in that sense, has appeared in the universe during the twenty centuries, nothing new has appeared during the last two, three, four or five centuries, and yet can we claim that the world that we live in to-day is the same world which existed even a hundred years ago ? Would it not be correct to say that it is an entirely new world ?

Modern scientific inventions, with the initiation of man into the secrets of nature, have revealed to us qualities and properties in nature which we did not even suspect or dream of, and, therefore, giving us a greater knowledge of those qualities and greater control over the powers of nature, and deeper knowledge of the mysteries of nature and of the universe in which we live. This is entirely different from the universe in which our grand-parents lived.

Religious Position

Similarly in the domain of religion we live in a new universe. We are, therefore, rather bound to have a new spiritual dispensation but just as the universe is the same and yet it gets a new character as the result of greater knowledge and larger invention through a deeper study, similarly this new dispensation in the spiritual field of Islam, although based on the sources of Islam and represents exactly the real spirit of Islam, yet has discovered to the world new beauties in Islam, new excellencies in Islam, provisions already made in Islam of which the world was ignorant and, therefore, it is new. It is fresh because it comes to a world that did not suspect that these beauties, these excellencies, these doctrines, these tenets, these remedies only revealed by this new dispensation existed before in Islam. I say therefore, that it would not be right to minimize the importance of this new dispensation which has been revealed to the world during this century and the latter part of the last century. Ahmadiyyet stands in a dual position in Islam. So far as its

origin is concerned, it rejects all the man-made doctrines which have encrusted themselves over the body of Islam during the last few centuries. It goes back 1300 years direct to the original sources of Islam ; and yet on the other hand, passing through the present, it penetrates far into the future. Now in the spiritual dispensation, we have an entirely new world through which mankind will henceforth have to pass. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the changes that are taking place in the universe indicate that the future generation will look back with wonder into the past. Great things are bound to happen in this world so that a new heaven and earth, as it were, are being created—that is to say a new dispensation. When I say this, I am stressing only one aspect of Ahmadiyyet. I am, however, in constant danger of minimizing the importance of the other, and, therefore, I am anxious that there should remain no misunderstanding about it. Let me go a step further and say that one of the characteristics of Ahmadiyyet is this. People may subsequently claim it but it is Ahmadiyyet that has first brought about a

miracle in the world by presenting to it the true explanation of the teachings of the Holy Quran. The time for their application may not yet have arrived, but you will find that it was necessary that somebody should discover these things to the world. You will find the greatest miracle of the Holy Quran has been revealed to the world by Ahmadiyyet at this stage.

Miracle of Islam

I do not mean to say that great miracles had not already been revealed. Even as a child I was accustomed to hear from those at whose feet I used to sit then that a great miracle of the Holy Quran was this, that no word or vowel point in it had been destroyed or altered. No doubt that in itself this is also a very great miracle, that the means for its physical preservation were so perfect that if all literatures disappeared to-day the Holy Quran would survive as it is preserved in the hearts of so many millions of Muslims. That indeed is a miracle in itself, but that was a very small thing as compared with what one could learn about the Holy Quran as one drew near

Ahmadiyyet. Let me say the very basis of Ahmadiyyet is this great miracle to which I have alluded and which I shall proceed to explain in a few sentences. I claim, it is Ahmadiyyet alone and the Founder of Ahmadiyyet who has revealed to the world, not only revealed, but put forward to the world, and made a challenge to the world, and he was willing to sustain it against any person who disputed it, and it is this that, however great the changes that might take place in the universe, however revolutionary the conditions of life under which mankind may have to live in each age and in each epoch, the Holy Quran will continue to furnish a complete dispensation for the physical, moral and spiritual welfare and advancement of mankind. And as the world changes, God out of His unlimited beneficence will continue to reveal from the Holy Quran itself doctrines that completely correspond to, and regulate and deal with the conditions that may have arisen since then. This is a thing which must distinguish the Word of God from any other dispensation which philosophers or thinkers.

might put before the world ; they cannot even make this claim.

First Great Message

This is the first great message of Ahmadiyyet to the world, that although one physical dispensation may have passed away, or may be disappearing before our sight, the new physical dispensation that has arisen will find that provision has already been made for it in the Holy Quran ; otherwise it would be a stain upon the spiritual providence of God, that whereas He provided for the spiritual sustenance of past ages, he failed to or neglected to provide for the spiritual sustenance of the future. If conditions have so radically changed that life is no longer the same as it was thirteen hundred years ago, and if the Holy Quran applied only to life as it then existed and failed to regulate certain demands of human necessity under conditions prevailing in the 20th century or in the centuries following, then the claim of the Holy Quran to be the last and complete spiritual dispensation will disappear. The first message of Ahmadiyyet,

therefore, is that however much the universe might change, and in the same proportion the properties and qualities which God had Himself embodied in the universe may be discovered, similar properties and qualities will be discovered to be embodied in the Word of God, which would be applicable to the changed condition because the Word and the Work of God proceed from the same source. That is only one illustration of what I was going to say this evening. That is the introduction that explained the position of Ahmadiyyet and what it claims to be whatever its vilifiers might say.

Ahmadiyyet is Islam Itself

Ahmadiyyet claims to be Islam itself and to be the dispensation of which most of you had been accustomed before Ahmadiyyet made its claim. Now let me go on to deal more specifically with the message of Ahmadiyyet to this age. The message of Ahmadiyyet to this age is in one word, reconciliation, a reconciliation between the various factors in human life which lead to discord, and

which lead to all that has made life restless and peaceless. That is the message of Ahmadiyyat ; and after having given the explanation with regard to the position of Ahmadiyyet in Islam, if during the subsequent part of my address I use the word Ahmadiyyet or Islam one for the other you will understand that I am referring to the same thing. I am taking a responsibility on behalf of Ahmadiyyet only and I don't attribute any of these doctrines to those who do not profess to be members of the Ahmadiyya Movement. If they agree with me during the subsequent portion of my address, so much the better, if not, then they are absolved of all responsibility. I proceed now to explain the Ahmadiyya point of view.

Message of Reconciliation

As I have said the message of Ahmadiyyet is reconciliation. It is one word but when applied, as I have said, to all those factors which in human life lead to discord, you will at once realize how wide the sphere of

the application of this expression becomes, and you will not expect me this evening to deal in detail with all those aspects, or even to deal with the outlines of any of them. All that I can do and hope to be able to accomplish is to indicate some of those factors, and also to indicate the attitude of Ahmadiyyet towards them, and if I succeed in doing that, I hope each of you will go away from this hall in the first place prouder of Islam whatever the differences between us may be, and in the second place, keener to know more about these problems and to find out how Islam has provided for them. Now I deal with some of the factors.

First of all Ahmadiyyet seeks to bring about reconciliation between man and his Creator. The tendency in modern times is that the more a man acquires of worldly lore, the greater his repugnance towards religion as such ; but why is this so ? What is the reason ? The reason is that in our schools and colleges and in the literature which the ordinary man peruses he is taught that he will not accept any doctrine or tenet unless

that doctrine or that tenet is accepted by his reason ; but when he goes into the domain of religion he is asked to accept certain things which do violence to his reason, or so he imagines, and he is asked to accept them simply on authority. He is told that he must accept this because this is part of the faith which he professes to follow and it is in this domain that he finds the principal reason of the discord. Man's inner nature rebels against accepting anything merely on authority, his reason demands the support of argument, his reason demands to be satisfied with what he is asked to accept. It would lead to some benefit for him if he could find reason sanctioning authority. But if he finds religious teaching applied to a doctrine which is not based on truth or when his reason tells him that the doctrine is mischievous, then such teaching or doctrine is sure to do him harm. On the other hand one is told that if he does not accept a certain truth he may not be regarded as a follower of a particular faith which he professes to follow. That converts a good many of his community

into hypocrites, into people who are willing to apply to themselves the badge or the label of a particular faith or particular community without in the least degree believing in and being prepared to support their belief by sacrifices which the doctrine, which that religion puts forward, demands. If that is the motive from which action proceeds, and unless there is faith in the sense that you truly believe, then you believe as a certainty that no action can follow. Consequently this discord.

Reconciliation of Fact

The first reconciliation admitted to be brought about by Islam as interpreted by Ahmadiyyet is between God and man in the matter of faith. With regard to this aspect again, referring to a miracle of the Holy Quran to which pointed and particularly emphatic attention has been drawn only by Ahmadiyyet, we believe that when the Holy Quran puts forward a doctrine, it is not merely an injunction prohibiting people from doing certain things or asking them to do certain things, but it always enforces its rules

by reason, it declares the benefit that will accrue to you by following it, and does not rest merely on authority ; it does not ask you to believe merely on authority, it does not ask you to believe by compulsion, it does not want from its followers unwilling obedience. it brings about a cheerful and willing allegiance on the part of its followers, because reason and faith have been reconciled. This has been stated as a claim and it requires proof but if I started giving you proofs in support of each claim, I am afraid, I could have kept you here for many evenings. But I do undertake that to any enquirer who addresses any enquiry with regard to any matter stated by me this evening to me, or to any other member of our community whom he might know in Lahore or elsewhere, reference would be provided, literatures would be pointed out by comparison of which in the seclusion of his own study he can satisfy himself whether the claim made by us is or is not established.

Only one Illustration

That is one illustration only but if that illustration is true, what a great message of

cheerfulness to people who believe truly and sincerely and who want to put this into their own relationship with God ! and yet they will find that their belief consists in formulæ and injunctions and practices which their reason fails to endorse.

Reconciliation between different sections of mankind

Next there is a reconciliation attempted between different sections of mankind. As you are aware, mankind are divided into various creeds and communities, but let me take the main divisions which unfortunately exacerbate feelings in India. This is the division into the followers of different religions. Ahmadiyyet or Islam seeks to bring about a reconciliation among these. It would be idle for you and futile for me to say : it brings about a reconciliation because I say my doctrines are reasonable, I believe in them and there will be a reconciliation. That only refers to eventual reconciliation, but people have got to live together in spite of differences which exist between them. It is no use telling

people that when your differences disappear then you will be reconciled. Therefore Ahmadiyyet recognizes that differences of some kind or the other will continue to exist and that reconciliation cannot be brought about by suppression of differences but that there must be two efforts directed towards this object. (i) One is the recognition of differences and how we are, in spite of them, to be reconciled to each other, and (ii) the second is to lay down the means of eventually complete and permanent reconciliation and elimination of differences. Whenever people try to bring about a reconciliation by the suppression of differences that in itself lays the foundation of future dissension and discord. Well, then the first principle in this sphere is the recognition of differences as a matter of fact. If differences were not to be recognized not only in this sphere but in all other spheres, all intellectual progress would come to an end. If as a result of this evening's address any of you takes back with him a little of this understanding, there would be a quickening of interest in a matter of this

kind. The very reasons for this evening's address are the differences that exist, and the whole progress made on the physical planet is due to differences. The world has in the past tried to persecute scientific inventors and investigators on the ground that they differed from those who had gone before them, but if their differences were suppressed or completely suppressed nobody would have been allowed to differ and there would have been no progress. Therefore it is the recognition of differences, not the suppression of differences, that is likely to lead to reconciliation in matters of religion. The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, (peace be on him), laid down this principle. We must recognize the differences that exist, we must try for their eventual elimination through the exercise of our reason and our intelligence, but during the period when in spite of the exercise of reason and intelligence differences continue, we must recognize them and try by means of tolerance and forbearance to cultivate a spirit of mutual goodwill. That A's doctrine

or faith differs from B is no reason why A should be set by the ears by him. The thing as stated is simple enough, but it appears, it is so difficult to practise that in this unfortunate country particularly, it is impossible to point to any two differing communities or sects or any particular tract of land where such tolerance or forbearance is shown.

Spirit of Tolerance

In order to promote such tolerance and forbearance the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, (peace be on him), made one suggestion which his followers try to promote, and which, in recent years, in spite of all the differences that have arisen and been accentuated, I must say the members of the various communities and followers of various religions have done a great deal to promote and foster. It was this, though in spite of each religion or the followers of each religion or the followers of each sect differing, they should come together on a common platform, and after discussing

certain subjects that affect the spiritual and moral welfare of humanity, they should put forward the teaching of their respective faiths from the same platform for the consideration of their countrymen. The benefit accruing from such conferences would be that in the first place we would become cognisant of the fact that people, who are as reasonable as we in different walks of life and in different professions, believe in certain things in which we believe ; this will promote a sense of tolerance and forbearance. I should not assume, as I am afraid it is commonly assumed, that any other man, who believes in a different thing from that in which I believe, does so simply because he is hostile to me and wants to destroy my faith and my community. When we come together, when he is prepared to support his views with such reasons as he can, as I listen to his explanation with a desire to understand the other man's point of view, that in itself will start a spirit of tolerance and forbearance. Also ultimately we shall be able to discover that there are many truths which are

common to a large majority of people, and that therefore it is no use trying to accentuate differences, and that our efforts should be directed towards our being brought together in such matter in which there are no differences, so that we may look reasonably upon the rest in order to discover whether any reconciliation may be possible there.

Practical Work

Now, as I have said, people following different faiths have done a good deal to promote that kind of co-operation. In the life-time of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, (peace be on him), I believe in 1889, there was held in Lahore a great Conference of Religions and five subjects were specified. On each the advocates of different religions were asked to read papers, and although that Conference was held four years before I was born the information that I have been able to gather about it is, that it was the most peaceful and harmonious conference of its kind. Since then that spirit is being taken up in different parts of the world. About 26 years ago,

there was held the first World Parliament of Religions, in which professors of different religions were asked to come forward and speak on certain subjects and state the teachings of their respective religions and certain aspects of those subjects. Then in 1924 there was held in connection with the British Exhibition of that year a great Conference of Religions in the Empire Institute in London, where the representatives of different religions were asked to participate. I had to go and the present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community also took part in the deliberations of that Conference. A good deal of misconception and misunderstanding was removed and people were astonished at the spiritual wealth which Islam could offer on all the subjects discussed. Recently in 1933 the second World Conference was held, and three members of our Community including myself delivered addresses at that Conference with regard to the various aspects of religion. My subject was "Islam Promoting Peace and Unity among the Nations," and a message from the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community was read in that Conference. This

kind of thing is being done more and more, as you are aware, in Lahore and other places. Wherever we have organized meetings for that purpose we have always met with most generous response from the followers of different faiths. Christians, Hindus and Sikhs have spoken in appreciation of the life and character of the Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him), and whenever they have invited us to go and speak at their meetings in appreciation of the Holy Ones of their faiths, we have always responded to their invitation. So far as Islam itself is concerned the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, (peace be on him), has emphasized in his teachings throughout that all spiritual teachings have one common source, and that there should therefore be tolerance and forbearance in regard to them. We should come together and revere the Prophets of each religious community. That is the principle of the Ahmadiyya Community, not merely as a matter of policy but as a matter of faith, based upon the express teaching of the Holy Quran, that to all nations and in all ages Prophets have been sent. We

believe Krishna as much a true Prophet of God as Ibrahim and Moses, and that Buddha and Zoroaster were as true Prophets of God, and for this there is the authority of the Holy Quran. We have not invented any of these doctrines in order to suit our conditions but in support of this we can quote chapter and verses from the Holy Quran.

The Holy Quran says : "There has not been a people to which a warner has not been sent." That was one teaching of the Holy Quran to which pointed and emphatic attention was drawn. Is not that the greatest source of reconciliation, that I should revere, not only revere but hold true, the great ones of the Hindus just as I hold true the great ones of the Jews. Just as I hold the great ones of Christianity in reverence, so much I hold true the great ones of the Sikhs, just as I hold true the Founder of our own Movement, just as I hold true the Greatest of the Prophets, so I must have the faith that all these were inspired by God, that all these were appointed for the guidance of mankind, that all these were the manifestations of the love that the Creator bears for the creatures,

for whose spiritual sustenance He has provided this means. Once I believe in this doctrine as a matter of faith, is it possible that I should ridicule, however much I differ from the followers of everyone of these Prophets in the interpretation of the teachings that they gave to the world? So far as their own lives and missions are concerned we are at one. That is one great reconciliation between the followers of different faiths. That some of the more reasonably-minded people have adopted this doctrine is so much the better. It is the Founder of Ahmadiyya Movement, (peace be on him), who first drew attention to it with regard to the teachings of the Holy Quran.

The Right Way

The next thing was, that it is no part of the propagation of Islam or any faith to denounce other faiths because a certain set of doctrines happen to be repugnant to me, because you may even be able to prove that it ought to be repugnant to everybody. You do not thus establish the truth of the doctrine that you follow. It is a perfectly

simple truth, and yet how many of those who are the advocates of different religions are prepared to follow that in practice, that it is by pointing out the beauties and excellences of the doctrines, that you believe in, you are able to induce people to look into and study it. It is only by pointing the beauties of your own faith that you will be able to convince others that what they believe is defective.

It is not our differences in religion alone which are promoting discord among mankind. I am afraid there are differences in the sphere of morals, there are differences in the sphere of politics, there are differences in the sphere of economics, there are differences in the sphere of international relations, all of which combine to emphasize the discord from which humanity is at the present moment suffering, and for every one of them Islam has made provision. I proceed to indicate some of them. Take the sphere of morality. That is a difficult subject, which may be little bit hard to follow at first dealing with it unless the ground has already been prepared, but even at the risk of being

misunderstood I must proceed to indicate some of the truths inculcated by Islam, which in the domain of morality the Promised Messiah laid bare to the world as a part of the Islamic teaching.

Human Nature Pure

In the first place he emphasized this great truth taught by Islam that human nature as such is pure and not tainted with evil, that evil is not inherent in man, that evil comes from outside. That was one great thing emphasized by him. What a message of cheerfulness and hope for humanity, at least for that section of humanity which is striving all the time to attain union with their Creator, the ultimate goal of all beings. To say that, is to support the Holy Quran which has taught it and Islam which has emphasized it.

No Inherent Evil

The next point is that no natural instinct in itself is evil, that no natural tendency is in itself evil, or is in itself good, that the nature of good and evil arises from conduct, in which a tendency or a desire or instinct

operates. Love is not in itself good, what we call hate is not in itself bad, but both these are natural instincts,—love or hate. In other words, the liking for a thing, after all, resolved into itself, is neither good nor evil. The dislike of a thing is not in itself good or evil. For instance, it is emphasized again and again in the Holy Quran that this elementary instinct of liking a person or thing is good provided it is so regulated that its exercise is confined to occasions when it is likely to lead to good, it is evil if exercised out of selfishness: and the regulations of the Holy Prophet, (peace be on him and the blessings of God), have regard of almost every internal tendency which does not become a moral quality unless it is recognized as such. I have taken this as an illustration which might appeal to every one. This instinct of liking is good provided it is regulated under three conditions: (1) that due gradation is observed, where the liking for one object ought to give way to the liking for another which is better entitled to your consideration. It is good where the

sense of liking any one thing is so construed that it gives way to nothing which is evil. For instance, where a man's affection for his own children is willing to give way to his allegiance to truth or honesty it is good, as it is being regulated within its proper sphere. Where the love for his children over-rides his allegiance to honesty and he is willing to accept bribes in order to provide for his children it will be manifest that it is evil ; (2) that it should be based mainly upon gratitude and not mainly upon benefits to be obtained. It is rather as I said a difficult subject. Again take the instance of the love for one's children ; although mainly embedded in our nature owing to the relationship between the parent and the child, it has yet indeed an element of future benefits. When there is a conflict between the element which is based on greed and element which is based on gratitude, the desire must give way to gratitude. (3) The third condition is that the practice should be confined not only to minimum gratitude or benefit but that the best object should be kept in view. We are

all told we should love everybody. It is a beautiful maxim, but it leads to confusion if we try to practise it in life. We must dislike certain things, otherwise the whole of society would come to an end within twenty-four hours. For instance, we must dislike evil, and there again a great distinction was drawn by the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, (peace be on him), between the evil-doer and the evil done. However, we must hate and discard evil, we must wish to reclaim the evil-doer whom we may eventually even grow to love. A vessel filled with filthy liquid will dry after the liquid is poured out. If we do not know means of spilling the liquid, we must break the vessel if we have no regard for the vessel. Certain things and certain actions we must dislike. And then there are degrees of dislike.

Another Group of Doctrines

Another group of doctrines emphasized by the Holy Founder of our Movement, (peace be on him), was the new spiritual dispensation that we are able to discover and apply. It was

the gradation in moral qualities. You take a person who is steeped in vice, his sense of right and wrong is obliterated. You tell him, you have got to become a saint. He says, do not bother me, I am too far from it. Islam does not teach that. Islam has laid down gradation of morals which each person by applying to himself or to others should be able to diagnose the degree of moral evil into which the sinner has fallen, and the way by which he can get away from sin in order that he might get to perfection. The Holy Quran has laid down these grades.

Three degrees of moral Excellence

The Holy Quran says:—

ان الله يامر بالعدل والاحسان وايتاذا ذى القربى وبذهمى
عن الفحشاء والمنكر والبغى

Adal is the first degree of moral excellence, *Ehsan* the next degree of moral excellence. The final degree of moral excellence is *Ita-i-Dil-Qurba*. Here are the gradations by which you can judge yourself. *Adl* is equity—equitable dealing with ones's fellow-beings. It is not merely translated as justice, it means equity, that is to say that your dealing with

your fellow human beings should be on the basis of equity, with no transgression of the slightest degree, and that for the good received, at least an equal amount of good must be returned. This is the least moral quality which a man begins to develop. *Adl* is at least the equal return of good for good. *Ehsan* is the next one. It is returning more good for the good received and even returning good for evil done.

There are three grades of moral excellence which a man must try to attain, and three grades of evil which he must avoid before he gets on to moral perfection. The evil is indicated as *Fahsha*. *Fahsha* means such evil which does not affect any other person but affects your own individual self. That is mostly evil thought, evil designs or nursing of evil designs. That is the first fall from moral excellence. The next is *Munkir*, that is, such individual evil conduct as is disliked or is repugnant to other human beings with whom you have to live. *Baghye* means injury, that is, such evil the effect of which, although manifested by action, spreads from yourself

to others. These are different classes. You progress in morals from one stage to another ; you go down in vice from one stage to the other. You cannot reform either a single individual or community or the whole of humanity by telling them that you are down in the wrong, and that is the way you have got to go to. Take the instance of a child who is told, here are all the school books you have to read them before you become an M.A. He cannot read them at once. He must take them stage by stage.

Three Stages

In these three stages Islam lays down the various means of eradicating evil and of developing excellence. That indicates that there is a good deal to be learnt in the domain of morality. Let me for a moment deal with economic effects and perhaps a word or two with regard to the social factors. Two years ago when the Round Table Conference was sitting in London, the Muslim delegates to the Joint Select Committee were invited into a committee room of the House of Commons to

address members of both Houses on the subject of the contribution of Islam towards the solution of world problems, particularly the economic problem. Several members addressed the members assembled there, and according to their own conception of the contribution of Islam they explained what they thought Islam does contribute towards the solution of the problem. One of them said, the solution was that the future Viceroy of India should be a member of the Royal House. Another said that the time had come when we must accept the doctrine of interest, that this prohibition of interest in Islam was the great handicap for Muslim communities, and unless this was removed the Muslims could not make any contribution towards the solution of the economic problem. I will try to give you a very brief outline of what I said on that occasion. I told them, if you mean that the economic end of humanity is this that there should be a number of millionaires in each community, and the poor working classes should live in distress from day to day, if we

want to achieve that object then Islam makes no contribution towards the solution. Islam has prescribed certain doctrines by which we can obtain the solution of the economic problem. Mr. James de Rothschild came up to me afterwards and said, if these were the economic teachings of Islam, I am afraid, there is no place for me in Islam. I told him that Islam had no room for him. Islam aims at a state of society where wealth continues all the time to revolve and does not accumulate at any time within a few hands. Islam aims at the general prosperity of the whole body—politics and does not aim at those rules of economic society which have developed during the 19th. and 20th, centuries. That is the first condition that Islam wishes to bring about and to safeguard us against certain evils in the economic body, which if not checked would bring about that state of society which exists in the West. Take the Islamic system of inheritance. This is designed for the distribution and revolution of wealth. In the first place Islam puts a check upon the power of disposition; $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of your property you

might give away, the remainder 2,3rd of the whole of the man's property must be distributed among a very large number of heirs.

The Tax of Zakat

Next, Islam has imposed a sort of tax in a manner which in every economic or religious system can bring prosperity to the whole of society and that is Zakat. Zakat is a legal tax imposed by a Muslim State, not upon income only but upon income and capital, so that capital that lies idle will be subject to Zakat, not the capital that is working, and it is a tax which is based upon this principle. According to Islam all the primary wealth-producing factors are a gift to the whole of humanity, and Islam, therefore, does not recognize in all these the position of ownership of any body. It considers them as a trust and, therefore, it says that when these factors are reduced in order to produce wealth, it is not enough to say that you have paid the workman his charges and, therefore, his share is finished. The share of this divine gift has yet got to be paid, and that must be paid in the

form of Zakat ; otherwise you would be using something that does not belong to you and that would not be fair.

Zakat is not an ordinary tax. It might be mixed with all other sources of revenue, but special commissioners of Zakat can be appointed and proceeds used only for the following:—*First*, for the promotion of science and learning, *second* for the inventors, who are engaged in the pursuits which are beneficial to the community, and who have no means to carry on their investigations, and *thirdly*, for the relief of the distressed and the poor. It can also be used with regard to certain public works. You can use it for the department of administration of law and order. Then another economic provision is just the one which that friend of mine suggested at that meeting in London, namely the prohibition of interest. What does interest do ? It merely serves to accumulate wealth within a few hands and I do not want to cast reflections, but classes which are engaged entirely upon this business of usury will tell you how many human qualities

disappear when a man follows the pursuit of exploiting the needs and distress of his fellow beings. Not only did Islam stop that. On the one hand Islam does not prohibit private loans, on the other hand it has laid down the institution of *Qarza-i-hasna*. In a spiritual system you are working for your own advance or welfare and not for the welfare of the State and, therefore in *Qarza-i-hasna* you are encouraged to lend to the community without any return. Each bond that is written for a loan must be dictated. This is something which most of the Muslims do not know. *It should be dictated by the debtor and not by the creditor.*

A System of Insurance

Lastly, Islam has provided a system of insurance which no other society or community has laid down or has been able to enforce, and this is legal. It is this that if a man happens to fall into circumstances which render him unfit, even after making every possible effort to maintain himself, the first duty of the State is to compel those

persons who would have succeeded him as his heirs if he had died leaving property, to support him. Is there any bigger insurance than this ?

No Inferiority Complex

Islam teaches that no nation as such should consider that it is superior to another, and that no nation should ridicule another. Again from the detailed instructions with regard to that we find that Islam has recognized the idea of superiority only with regard to individual superiority, and then only in certain spheres, where a neglect of it might have led to a certain harm.

In matter of rights Islam recognizes Khilafat. The Khalifa has certain powers only for the purpose of Khilafat, but as an individual the Khalifa is not superior to other Muslims. Take the instance of Hazrat Umar. He was sued in his individual capacity by somebody who had a claim against him. The Qazi bowed to him and asked the Khalifa to come to him, and the Khalifa expressed his resentment and disapproved of the

conduct of the Qazi, and stayed where the opposite party was standing. "You should not have observed that distinction between me and the plaintiff as an individual," he said. Again there is the question of racial relations, the most important of which is marriage. Islam has given detailed instructions and there again it differs from other systems in regarding it not as a matter of individual concern.

Basis of the State

The basis of marriage is physical. It is not a concern of two individuals only but the concern of the respective families and of the whole society. Islam has prescribed instructions for bringing up of children also. Next is the relationship between the State and the subject. The Head of the State is the Khalifa who is chosen as the best man. There is one important doctrine with regard to the relations of the subjects with the State, and that doctrine is the doctrine of reconciliation between the citizens and the State. Islam says that once a certain form

of Government has been established, after that, people living in that territory are not, under any circumstance while living in that territory, to take up arms. Islam says that in may be that in certain instances certain communities might suffer for this doctrine. The doctrine inculcated by Islam is that the amelioration of the condition of the subjects is to be by reason, by representation, by argument, by co-operation and persuasion and not by violence. International relations is a subject based upon the Holy Quran and derived from the Holy Quran. Islam visualizes one unit or at least a world-federation. The injunctions laid down by Islam in this connection are these:—If two nations fall out, the other nations, it means Muslim nations, must issue a notice calling upon the belligerents to submit their differences to them. If any of the belligerent parties refuses to come to terms or accept the award given, in that case the other nations must go to war against the recalcitrant. In order to force that nation into submission, and supposing arbitration is

not accepted, that nation must take the risk of combined attack by all other nations. Again the principle laid down is, that if the belligerents make their submission, then reconciliation is to be brought about between the original fighting nations with regard to the quarrel that arose between them, and those nations who had taken up arms to subdue the aggressor shall not impose any conditions on the subdued nation. They must not say, each of us had been put to trouble, give us a bit of your territory. Peace must be brought about with regard to the original quarrel. One of the great factors which are causing so much distress by this preparation for another war is because the peace terms were so inequitable. If these instructions are followed, there would be left no cause for another war. The fundamental principle is the need for an effective sanction for peace and against war.

Preparation and Tyranny

These are, in brief, the teachings of Islam, and this the Message of Ahmadiyyet, and let

me assure you towards the end of my lecture that no amount of criticism which is based upon misrepresentation whether that misrepresentation is conscious or unconscious has ever checked the advance of truth. The study of history shows that those who are vilifying and persecuting are subsequently put in the position of those who have been vilified and persecuted. No amount of misrepresentation or vilification or persecution has ever succeeded in destroying a community, more particularly a religious community. Remember this that whatever circumstances a man passes through, those are meant for his preparation and his training. I firmly believe that our community is at present passing through a course of tribulation by way of preparation for the obligations that are bound to be laid upon our shoulders as time passes, and for the functions that we must discharge if we are to be the torch-bearers of truth and the spiritual leaders of mankind. In order that we should carry this message to the uttermost ends of the earth we must be

tried, persecuted, vilified and put to all sorts of inconveniences, annoyances and troubles, and if we are able to bear that vilification and persecution, we shall have discharged the obligation laid upon us. We cannot fit ourselves for our great task until we pass through that fire. It is necessary that we should qualify ourselves by service. Persecution will purify us and outward good work help us to serve the best interest of mankind as torch-bearers of enlightenment for the human race.

For further informations please refer to "Ahmadiyyet" or True Islam by Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih Mirza Bashirud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, the present Head of the Ahmadiyya community.

Ahmadiyya Moslem Missions

During the last 60 years from the birth of the Ahmadiyya Movement different missions have been established in foreign lands some of which have been noted below for information.

Besides, there is a large number of missions both in India under the Head Quarters at Qadian and in Pakistan under the Head Quarters at Rabwah, which are not mentioned here for want of space.

(i) Centres & Head Quarters

- (1) India :...Qadian, East Punjab.
- (2) Pakistan :—Rabwah, West Pakistan.

(ii) Missions in Foreign Countries

B.E. AFRICA :—P. O. Box 554 Nairobi, Kenya Colony.

BORNEO :—Box 30, Jesselton.

FRANCE :—A. R. Malik, 220 Bd. Pereire Paris 17 (m).

GERMANY :—Ch. Abdul Latif, Orderfelder Strasse 18, Hamburg 20.

GOLD COAST :—P. O. Box 39, Salt Pond.

ISRAEL :—Mount Carmel, Haifa.

JAVA :—Masjid Ahmadiyya, Nagarawangi 57, Tasikmalaja.

NETHERLANDS :—Q. U. Hafiz, Ruychrocklaan 54, Haag.

NIGERIA :—P. O. Box 418, Lagos.

SPAIN :—K. I. Zafar, Lista 58, Madrid.

SWITZERLAND :—S. Nasir Ahmad, Beckhammer 35, Zurich 6.

SIERRA LEONE :—P. O. Box 11, BO.

SYRIA :—Zaviatul Husni, Shaghaur, Damascus.

U.S.A. :—

1. 2141 Leroy Place N. W. Washington 8, D. C.
2. 2522 Webster Avenue, Pittsburgh 19, Pa.
3. 613 Locust Street, St. Louis 1, Missouri.
4. 115 W. 116th St., Suite, 2, New York 26, N. Y.

UNITED KINGDOM :—

The London Mosque, 63 Melrose Road, London, S. W. 18.

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